

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report

Meeting: June 12, 2025

From: Public Works Department

Subject: Park Avenue Traffic Calming Improvements



Recommended Action: 1) Approve the traffic calming plans for Park Avenue; and 2) authorize staff to execute Change Order No. 1 to the 2025 Pavement Maintenance Project Contract with Graham Contractors, Inc. to include traffic calming measures and increase the amount of the contract by \$120,000, contingent on approval by the Council of funding for the project in the FY 2025–26 budget.

Background: Park Avenue serves as a principal arterial road within Capitola, facilitating vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. Designated by Caltrans as a principal arterial and part of the Pacific Coast Bike Route, it is vital for both local and regional transportation. Following a traffic study conducted in January 2020, the City Council identified the need for speed reduction measures due to safety concerns along this corridor.

In response, the Public Works Department engaged the traffic engineering team, Kimley Horn, to evaluate alternatives for calming traffic on Park Avenue. Three alternatives were presented to City Council in September 2022, focusing on reducing vehicular speeds and enhancing safety for all users.

- Alternative 1: Road Diet Striping - Involves lane narrowing, buffered bike lanes, and speed feedback signs.
- Alternative 2: Lateral Shift - Includes lane narrowing, buffered bike lanes, horizontal lane deflections, and speed feedback signs.
- Alternative 3: Median Shift - Features lane narrowing, buffered bike lanes, median deflections, and speed feedback signs.

Following this presentation, the Council directed staff to conduct community outreach on the proposed options.

In late 2023, a public survey was conducted to gather community input on the proposed traffic calming measures, receiving around 100 responses. This effort was complemented by a virtual public meeting held in January 2024, which attracted considerable participation.

Key feedback from the outreach highlighted several community concerns and suggestions:

- Parking Issues: Concerns about potential reductions in parking availability, particularly impacting families with multiple vehicles.
- Traffic Safety: Residents requested better speed enforcement, including the use of radar signs and increased police presence. Suggestions were made for physical barriers to separate bicycle and vehicular traffic, as well as the installation of speed bumps to discourage speeding.
- Support for Road Diet: There was significant support for a road diet to narrow car lanes and widen bike lanes, enhancing safety for cyclists and pedestrians, especially schoolchildren.
- Community Engagement: Residents expressed a desire for more opportunities for community input and transparency regarding traffic solutions. This meeting was noticed to the neighborhood and all participants of previous outreach efforts.
- Traffic Patterns: Park Avenue is often used as a shortcut, which has grown in recent months, with increased traffic due to other routes impacted by road work, raising safety concerns for both residents and cyclists.

- Visual Concerns: Some community members raised worries about aesthetic changes that could detract from the area's natural beauty.

Of the options presented at the meeting and the online survey, Alternative 1 was the most supported. This alternative provides green bike lane markings at all intersections, additional speed feedback signs, a buffered bike lane on the south side of the street from Monterey to Cabrillo, buffered bike lanes on both sides from Cabrillo to Coronado and reduced lane widths throughout. This alternative does not include any loss of parking. Buffered bike lanes are included in all areas where there is existing roadway width. Physical barriers are not being recommended due to the maintenance challenge they would create to keep the roadway safe and clear of debris in an area with heavy amounts of leaf litter from large eucalyptus trees. Speed bumps are not recommended at this time due to costs and the general unsuitability of speed bumps on an arterial roadway.

In May 2025, the City contracted with Graham Contractors, Inc. to perform the 2025 Pavement Maintenance Project ("PMP"). In early 2025, the City Council held a series of discussions related to the broader Rail Trail project, including the Park Avenue corridor. After considering various alternatives and community input, the Council determined Municipal Code 8.72 precluded the proposed RTC design alternatives. During the FY 2025–26 budget discussion on May 29, 2025, Council directed staff to implement the Park Avenue traffic calming project as developed in 2024.

To implement the traffic calming measures as developed in 2024 most efficiently, the City must amend the 2025 Pavement Maintenance Project Contract with Graham Contractors, Inc. to revise the scope to include the traffic calming measures, as designed by Kimley Horn and shown on Exhibit A, and to increase the amount of the contract by \$120,000.

At its May 29, 2025, meeting, Council directed staff to include funding for the revised Project in the FY 2025-26 budget. Council will consider the budget at its June 26th meeting. Staff thus currently seeks authority to amend the contract with Graham Contractors as detailed above, contingent on Council authorizing funding in the FY 2025-26 budget.

Fiscal Impact: The total project cost is currently estimated to be \$120,000. This amount is proposed as part of the FY 2025–26 budget. If Council adopts the proposed budget, which includes the additional funds, staff will amend the 2025 Pavement Maintenance Project contract with Graham Contractors, Inc. to incorporate the traffic calming measures.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The Pavement Maintenance Project is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c) for the maintenance, repair, or minor alteration of existing facilities, as it consists of repair and maintenance of existing public infrastructure with negligible or no expansion of use. The Park Avenue traffic calming measures involve modifying the existing bike lane striping to implement buffered bike lanes, enhancing safety for cyclists and pedestrians without altering the current roadway configuration. These measures improve existing public facilities and do not increase capacity or significantly change the use of Park Avenue. They also do not create any new or previously unanalyzed environmental impacts.

Attachments:

1. Proposed Plans

Report Prepared By: Kailash Mozumder, Public Works Project Manager

Reviewed By: Jessica Kahn, Public Works Director, Julia Gautho, City Clerk

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager